



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LVIII, Battlefield Tour Edition

Chicago, Illinois

April 29-30, May 1-3, 1998

## 48th Annual Battlefield Tour: North Carolina "The Closing Campaigns of the Western Armies"

WITH A THEME of "The Closing Campaigns of the Western Armies" you are cordially invited to attend The Civil War Round Table's annual battlefield tour to North Carolina. This, our club's first visit to the state, is designed to provide a broad understanding of the activities of Sherman's Army to end the war and efforts of the Confederacy to stem the tide.

The tour will visit the significant coastal and inland sites associated with the closing days of the Confederacy. These campaign engagements, primarily taking place in early 1865, resulted in the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston's Confederate troops at Durham on April 26.

A cadre of outstanding authors and historians, known for their knowledge of the region, will provide an unforgettable historical perspective surrounding the strategy, personalities, and human interest stories associated with each site.

We are again indeed fortunate to have the dean of Civil War history, Edwin C. Bearss, former National Park Service chief historian to lead the group.

He will be supported by Mark L. Bradley, prominent Tar Heel state historian and author of the recently published book *The Battle of Bentonville, Last Stand in the Carolinas*. Mr. Bradley is known as a preeminent scholar of the Civil War in North Carolina.

Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., a native and resident of Wilmington, will provide fascinating insights into the Union strategy behind the Wilmington campaign, the capture of Fort Fisher and subsequent strategic moves by Union forces, such as engagements at Fort Anderson and Town Creek. These activities led to the capture of Wilmington on February 21, 1865. Fonvielle is the author of a critically acclaimed book, *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope*.

Forming the final quadrant of our tour cadre is John C. Goode, Historic Site Manager of the Bentonville battlefield. Goode is a top-notch expert on the Battle of Bentonville, Wise's Fork, and other North Carolina Civil War sites. He has served as advisor and counsel for numerous historical research projects, authors, teachers, and students.

### THE COASTAL CAMPAIGNS

A strategic foothold in North Carolina was secured by a combined Union Army-Navy invasion of the state through a series of engagements from January through July, 1862. The major objective of the Federal troops was established by securing Roanoke Island, New Bern, Beauford Harbor, and Fort Macon. However, in the next several months the

### COST OF THE TOUR

\$399 per person, double occupancy.

\$530 single occupancy.

Non-members must add \$25 per person to the above prices. Please indicate on your registration form the person with whom you wish to room.

**Shuttle bus service** from the Raleigh-Durham International Airport to the Dunn Ramada Inn will be offered the evening of Wednesday, April 29 at a nominal cost of \$15. Reservations are required. Shuttle bus departures are scheduled for 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm (EST) from the airport. Incoming tour members should meet in Terminal A, lower level baggage claim area at the north end of the building. A greeting area will be set up. Please adjust your flight schedules to meet within the timeframe of our shuttle service.

**Tour costs include:** bus service for all activities beginning at The Ramada Inn in Dunn, April 29 and ending at the Raleigh-Durham International Airport on Sunday, May 3; accommodations at The Ramada Inn, April 29-30 and The Days Inn, Wilmington, NC, May 1-2; lunches and dinners; daily bus transportation; refreshments on the buses; guides; admission fees; tour kits and badges; group service gratuities; and evening programs. Breakfasts are not included. A cash bar will be available during the evening Command Posts.

We reserve the right to change schedule arrangements based on unforeseen and unanticipated circumstances.

**Boarding policy:** Boarding and seating on specific buses will be accommodated on a first come, day-to-day policy. Once seated for the day on a specific bus and seat, squatters rights will prevail for the duration of the day. For each subsequent day, the choice of buses and seat selection will continue on a first-come basis.

Federals did not take advantage of their position.

In the late fall of 1864, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells urged that the Lincoln administration secure Wilmington. The objective was to close the last remaining port accessible by blockade runners that allowed the South to replenish its dwindling supply of materials needed to support their war effort. A joint Union Army-Navy operation was created under the naval command of Admiral David D. Porter and the army lead by Major General Godfrey Weitzel.

General William H. C. Whiting was responsible for the defense of Wilmington. At his side was Colonel William Lamb, garrison commander of Fort Fisher. Concerned for

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## THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



**Founded December 3, 1940**  
601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817  
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Phone: 847-698-1438

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### THE COASTAL CAMPAIGN (continued from page 1)

the security of Wilmington, President Jefferson Davis assigned a division under Major General Robert F. Hoke. In addition, in late 1864 he appointed General Braxton Bragg as the field commander of the operation.

The combined Union expedition against Fort Fisher and the closing of the Wilmington port began in earnest in December 1864. With a rendezvous of an army flotilla of 6500 troop transports and a naval armada comprised of fifty-nine warships, the Union forces attacked Fort Fisher with vigor on Christmas Day. A failed expedition to breach the fort by a ship rigged with explosive charge and an

unsuccessful amphibious landing at Federal Point by a heroic New York regiment were significant events leading to Union disaster. The New York regiment neared an approach to the fort along the west side, before being ordered to retreat.

General Benjamin Butler ordered his troop transports to cease operation and return to Hampton Roads, Virginia, on December 26. A storm of public criticism occurred after the news of the assault's failure. Finger pointing accessing blame for the failed attack occurred among the Union command. For the Confederacy, an uneasy stalemate prevailed as a result of the failed Union engagement. As the New Year began, Lee's supply line remained open.

The successful military expedition in late December of Sherman's Army of the Tennessee, as it traveled through the southern states, provided new impetus for the Union cause and a renewed attack on Fort Fisher. Capturing Savannah, Georgia, on December 22, Sherman's Army was on a roll.

With Grant's approval, Sherman continued his inland march north through the Carolinas. His ultimate destination was to join Grant's forces. If the expedition was successful, the drive had the potential of a lynch-pin; it would force Lee's army to retreat from Richmond and Petersburg. The die was cast, the final stage of the Union army's Carolina campaign was set in motion. With Wilmington's capture, Sherman had an additional supply point to support his movements.

With new vigor, Grant assigned a fresh face as the commander of the Wilmington forces, General Alfred H. Terry. Terry and Admiral Porter formulated strategic plans for a second combined forces expedition. A rendezvous of fourteen army transports and fifty-eight gunboats gathered at New Inlet just off the coast flanking Fort Fisher on the evening of January 12, 1865. The determined Federal contingent prepared for the second assault on Fort Fisher.

Awaiting the Federal attack was a garrison of eight hundred Confederates under the command of Colonel Lamb. Joining Lamb on January 13th in defense of the fort was General Whiting.

The Federals achieved a successful amphibious landing on Federal Point, four miles north of Fort Fisher on January 13. They were unopposed by General Robert F. Hoke's forces, entrenched at Sugar Loaf, a location just north of the landing. With the beachhead established, the Union position was enhanced when it entrenched across the narrow peninsula from east to west, thus cutting the Confederate position in two.

Simultaneously, a tremendous bombardment by Porter's gunboats led a coordinated attack upon the fort. The force of shot was directed toward the Fort Fisher landface instead of previous shots at the flagstuffs within the works. This time, the bombardment was very effective in destroying the fort's guns and earthworks.

On Sunday, January 15, the Naval shelling was combined with an infantry assault. It proved successful for the Union cause. Porter shifted his fire to strategic positions within the fort while a land attack occurred by a contingent of two thousand sailors and marines along the beach front of the fort. On the west side, near Shepherd's Battery, several brigades of Terry's infantrymen stormed the fort in mid-afternoon.

The assault along the beachhead resulted in severe Union losses, but Terry's forces managed to breach the western side of the fort at Shepherd's Battery. Union forces scaled the walls of the fort. From battery to battery, hand to



hand combat prevailed as the southern forces succumbed to the assault. It was a vicious and bloody fight.

The remainder of the fort's garrison retreated across the open land to Battery Buchanan, the southernmost battery of the fort and adjacent to New Inlet. The final surrender occurred the late evening of January 15 as the wounded General Whiting and his valiant companion, Colonel Lamb, reluctantly accepted terms offered by the Union forces.

The heroic defense of Fort Fisher by the soldiers in Gray was at an end. The fort could no longer defend New Inlet for blockade runners. The fall of Fort Fisher to Union troops allowed the Federals to continue their relentless series of engagements along the Cape Fear River as they closed on the city. Slowly the Union military was successful in their campaign for Wilmington through subsequent military engagements at Fort Anderson, Town Creek, and Forks Road.

In the early morning of February 22, General Bragg's forces had had enough. The spent Confederate troops quietly evacuated Wilmington, their retreat a profound wound to the Confederate cause.

### THE INLAND CAMPAIGN

When Sherman and Grant formulated the daring strategic plans to march through the deep south after the fall of Atlanta, few could have imagined the outcome of this inland campaign.

With Savannah, Georgia, captured on December 21, 1864, Sherman began his march north through the Carolinas. The objective was to reduce Confederate morale through armed engagements and terminate Lee's source of supplies.

Later, Sherman said about his army's activities, "Were I to express my measure of the relative importance of the march to the sea and of that from Savannah northward, I would place the former at one, and the latter at ten, or the maximum."

Sherman's march north from Savannah began in earnest in January, 1865 with a force totaling sixty thousand.

At the same time, with the coastline secured, Grant directed the Union forces at Wilmington to move inland toward Goldsboro, North Carolina. The objective was to join Sherman's forces marching four hundred miles from the south. Entering South Carolina in early February, Sherman's forces met with little opposition. On February 17, Union troops captured Columbia, South Carolina and on the following day, Charleston capitulated.

Desperate to stop the advancing Union Army, Confederate President Jefferson Davis sought out General Joseph Johnston to resume leadership of the Army of Tennessee. On February 23, Johnston took command of a meager force of 25,000 men.

Sherman divided his army into two wings comprised of two corps each. It was on March 7 that the first elements of Sherman's left wing crossed into North Carolina as they moved toward Fayetteville. The Union Cavalry under Judson Kilpatrick sought to engage Wade Hampton's Confederate Cavalry as he closed toward Fayetteville. Kilpatrick was accompanied by a beautiful southern woman, whose charms he found irresistible.

The engagement occurred at Monroe's Crossroads. In the early morning hours of March 10, the rebels launched a surprise attack, scattering the Union camp. In disarray, the bluecoats quickly fled. From his headquarters, Kilpatrick sprang from his bed, barely escaping in his night clothes as

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## TOUR SCHEDULE

Variations to the schedule are sometimes necessary. Should this occur, announcements will be made as soon as possible.

### Day 1: Wednesday, April 29

#### "The Opening Salvo"

Rendezvous at the Raleigh-Durham International Airport with scheduled bus shuttle at 8:00 and 10:00 pm (EST), Terminal A, north end, lower level. Enroute to Dunn, N.C., The Ramada Inn, tour headquarters.

### Day 2: Thursday, April 30

#### "The Union Advance: A Relentless Objective"

8:00 am Tour guides: Ed Bearss, Mark Bradley. Board buses, trip to Godwin; Aversboro Battlefield Site.

11:30 am Enroute to Fayetteville with lunch; visit Fayetteville Arsenal Site Museum; Fort Bragg Military Reservation; Monroe's Crossroads; Fort Bragg Library; Civil War Military Art Gallery

5:00 pm Fort Bragg Officers Club. Clean-up time

5:30 pm Command Post, cash bar in the Hodge Room.

6:00 pm Dinner (informal dress) and entertainment by the 82nd Airborne Chorus. Speaker: Edwin C. Bearss

8:45 pm Board buses. Depart for Ramada Inn, Dunn

### Day 3: Friday, May 1

#### "Futile Efforts to Stem the Tide"

8:00 am Check-out of Ramada Inn. Board buses.

Tour guides: Ed Bearss, Mark Bradley, John Goode.

Enroute to Bentonville Battlefield Site. Lunch in field.

4:30 pm Arrival and check in at The Days Inn, Wilmington

6:00 pm Board buses. Depart for the USS North Carolina Battleship

6:15 pm Command Post and self-guided tour on-board the battleship

7:00 pm Dinner on the fan-tail (weather permitting) or below decks. Featured speakers: Chris E. Fonville, Jr. and Mark Bradley

9:15 pm Board buses. Return to The Days Inn

### Day 4: Saturday, May 2

#### "Final Campaign Stage: The Fall of Fort Fisher and Wilmington"

8:00 am Tour guides: Ed Bearss, Chris Fonvielle, Jr.

Board buses. Enroute to Fort Fisher—sites associated with the siege and capture: Forks Road, Sugar Loaf, Federal Point; Fort Fisher State Historic Site.

11:30 am Board buses. Ferry across the Cape Fear River. Follow Union advances along the river to Fort Anderson and Town Creek. Box lunch enroute.

11:30 am Special Walking Tour Option: Board buses, box lunch enroute, for two hour walking tour of Wilmington. (See reverse of Registration Form insert.)

5:00 pm Return to The Days Inn.

6:15 pm Board buses. Enroute to *Henrietta II* River Boat Excursion. Boarding in downtown Wilmington.

6:30 pm Command Post on-board the *Henrietta II*.

7:00 pm Dinner and Fun Night. A special event of fun and surprises; entertainment by John Golden. Awards and recognitions by Marshall Krolick.

9:30 pm Board buses. Return to The Days Inn.

### Day 5: Sunday, May 3

#### "The Final Surrender"

7:45 am Tour guides: Ed Bearss, John Goode. Check out of The Days Inn. Board buses for Raleigh-Durham; Wise's Fork

12:15 pm Arrive at The Bennett House State Historic Site, museum and grounds. Catered lunch at the site.

3:15 pm Board buses. Depart for the Raleigh-Durham International Airport.

4:00 pm Arrival at airport and end of tour.



# Armchair Generalship

Compiled by Marshall D. Krolick



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- Browning, Robert M., Jr., *From Cape Charles to Cape Fear: The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron During the Civil War*.
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- Johns, John, "Wilmington During the Blockade," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, June, 1974.
- Johnson, Clint, *Touring the Carolinas' Civil War Sites*.
- Johnson, Robert U. and Clarence C. Buel, editors, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vols. I and IV.
- Kuslan, Jim, "Bennett Place: Humble Shrine to Peace," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, April, 1990.
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- Nye, Wilbur S., "Kilpatrick Caught in his Underwear at Battle of Monroe's Crossroads," *Civil War Times*, April, 1961.
- Sauers, Richard A., *The Burnside Expedition in North Carolina*.
- Sauers, Richard A., "Laurels for Burnside: The Invasion of North Carolina, January-July 1862," *Blue & Gray Magazine*, May, 1988.
- Snell, Mark, editor, *North Carolina, The Final Battles*.
- Vatavuk, William M., "In the Shadow of Appomattox: The Surrender at Bennett Place," *Blue & Gray Magazine*, May 1985.
- Wheeler, Richard, *Sherman's March*.

**ON THE TOUR:** Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate times each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

## THE INLAND CAMPAIGN (continued from page 3)

he left his southern lady for capture by closing Confederates. This episode became known among Union infantry as "Kilpatrick's Shirt-tail Skeedaddle."

After securing the city of Fayetteville on March 11, Sherman set up temporary headquarters in the old U.S. Arsenal. From here, he planned further military operations toward his goal of reaching Goldsboro and securing the large rail center there. Amid heavy rains that made marching difficult, Sherman's army departed. The left wing and Kilpatrick's cavalry proceeded north toward Averagesboro while the right wing took a flanking route toward Goldsboro.

Awaiting the union left wing was Hardee's forces, south of Averagesboro. As the two armies engaged, the military tactics that unfolded are known for their classic lateral movements. The graycoats retreated but not before inflicting 682 casualties on the Union while suffering 865 losses.

As the Union left wing continued northeast, advancing Union foragers engaged the picket line of Wade Hampton's Confederate forces on the Goldsboro Road, about two miles south of Bentonville. The date was Sunday morning, March 19.

The Union position on the first day of battle was a defensive one. The Confederate forces were in clear superiority of troop strength and strategic position. Hampton urged Johnston to take advantage of the situation, believing a quick attack would be to their benefit. The southern forces launched an attack in mid-afternoon, advancing on the Goldsboro Road which left the line of the Union center and left in retreat. This series of successful attacks and assaults let Union forces to barely hold the line at the end of the day, diverting a military defeat for the Union.

Sherman, painfully aware of a potential Union disaster, ordered the right wing to return to Bentonville. The following day, March 20, joined the left wing for support, thus forming a function of troops along the Goldsboro Road.

While the two opposing forces maneuvered for strategic positions, Sherman remained reluctant to engage Johnston in a major confrontation. His hopes were that the rebels would allow his army to proceed toward Goldsboro without resistance. The day's engagements consisted mostly of a series of skirmishes.

On March 21, Johnston found his forces outnumbered almost four to one. Union General Joseph Mower led two brigades of his division in a flanking movement off the left of the Confederate line. Mower's forces reached the outskirts of Bentonville but the charge was stopped at the last minute by a Confederate cavalry brigade. Sherman, uncertain about the success of the ongoing skirmish activities,

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**THE INLAND CAMPAIGN** *(continued from page 4)*

ordered Mower to retreat. This ended the dominating strategic position Mower's brigades had secured near the village. For General Hardee, it was a bittersweet occasion. While the Union forces gave up the charge, his teenage son, Willie, was mortally wounded.

Worried that their only avenue of retreat north would be cut off, Johnston decided to withdraw his forces. In quiet retreat, on the night of March 21, the rebel army left the field for the northern destination of Smithfield. The Battle of Bentonville became the largest engagement of the Civil War on North Carolina soil. It resulted in 1,527 Union casualties while the Confederate forces suffered 2,606 losses.

With the retreat of the Gray from Bentonville and as Union forces in the Carolinas converged from the south and east toward Goldsboro, the futility of the Confederate cause became more apparent. The retreat of Lee's army in early April, the surrender at Appomattox on April 10 and the evacuation of Richmond were foreboding for the Confederates.

In the heartland of North Carolina, what remained of Johnston's three Army Corps were gathered at the state capital, Raleigh. In a key meeting called by Jefferson Davis with some of his cabinet members and Joe Johnston at Greensboro, the group pondered with anguish the future of the Confederacy. Davis finally agreed to allow Johnston to initiate surrender talks with Sherman.

Meanwhile, Sherman's army continued their aggressive pursuit of the rebels, occupying Goldsboro on March 22 and 23. After meeting with President Lincoln and General Grant in City Point, Virginia, to discuss future military strategy, Sherman returned to Goldsboro on March 30. From this base of operations, he planned to initiate further attacks against Johnston.

Thursday, April 13, was a fateful day for the Confederacy as Raleigh was evacuated and occupied by Union forces. In the early morning hours, Sherman arrived and set up his headquarters in the former residence of Governor Zebulon Vance. Here, he received Johnston's initial message, requesting to begin peace negotiations through civil authorities. With Confederate General Wade Hampton making the arrangements, a meeting was planned between the two armies on Monday, April 17.

As Sherman and his cadre gathered at Durham Station on the 17th to meet with Johnston, they received the startling news of the assassination of President Lincoln. They met Johnston and his party along the Hillsborough Road. Johnston obliged Sherman for a "quiet meeting place" by leading the contingent of officers and aides to the Bennett Farm.

Here, in a modest farm house, the two generals discussed peace terms. Finalizing the surrender arrangements was easier said than done. The initial terms offered to the Confederacy by Sherman were subsequently denied by President Andrew Johnson's administration as being too lenient. While Sherman fumed over the delay and his government's posturing, an agreement was finally drafted that was suitable for the Northern politicians.

The final agreement was a simple military surrender. It occurred on April 26 at the Bennett House, where the two generals and their staff met for the last time. With these terms, the hostilities were ended in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. For North Carolina forces, the mustering out of troops and issuing paroles took place over the next several weeks.





## TRANSPORTATION / LOGISTICS / ACCOMMODATIONS

In making your travel arrangements our recommendation is to arrive early and stay late. Every effort will be made to accommodate individual travel schedules. However, your cooperation in planning your travel itinerary to coordinate with our transportation arrangements will be appreciated.

The Raleigh-Durham International Airport has been selected as our incoming/departure site because of its central location in the state as a major air hub. We have arranged for a rendezvous of incoming tour members, meeting in Terminal A, lower level, baggage claim area at the north end of the building. A hospitality table will be set up.

Based on the most likely flight arrivals from Chicago/O'Hare airport, departures by shuttle bus are scheduled for 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm (EST). Boarding will occur immediately outside the lower level of Terminal A, north end.

From the airport, our destination is Dunn, N.C.; a sixty-minute drive SE of Raleigh via Route 440/40 south as we travel around the city toward Dunn. Exit Route 95 to proceed south to Exit #73 and The Ramada Inn. We will be staying here for two nights, April 29 and 30. (910) 892-8101. In Wilmington, our stay will be at The Days Inn, 5040 Market Street, the evenings of May 1 and 2. (910) 799-6300.

Since the origin and end of our tour is from the Raleigh-Durham International Airport, we don't want to see any stranded travelers who travel by auto and join our bus tour during the itinerary. For those traveling by car, long term parking at the airport is available near the terminal for a nominal fee of \$3 or \$4 per day per car. A "Park and Ride" shuttle runs about every twelve minutes.

On Sunday, May 3, the tour will end with arrival at the Raleigh-Durham Airport about 4:00 pm. Please make your travel arrangements accordingly.

**Because** it is impractical to schedule our tour of the various sites in historical chronological order, Ed Bearss will provide an informal talk at the beginning of our tour. He will summarize what we are going to see and do during the tour and furnish us with insights into the relationship of each site we visit and its importance to the overall events that shaped the coastal and inland campaigns.

**Note:** In scheduling these arrangements, the day's activities does not include a freshen-up stop at The Ramada prior to our trip to Fort Bragg in the afternoon. Please make personal arrangements for wet-weather clothing change (if necessary), prior to boarding the buses in the morning. Accommodations will be available at the Fort Bragg Officers Club later in the day for a change of clothing.

### SPECIAL WILMINGTON WALKING TOUR

On Saturday, May 2, an optional walking tour of downtown Wilmington is offered. This tour is an alternate to the afternoon activities scheduled in the field. It will begin at noon after our visit to Fort Fisher.

A special shuttle will return those taking the walking tour to Wilmington. Sponsored by The Wilmington Adventure Tour Co., your guide will be Bob Jenkins.

The two-hour tour will begin at the foot of Market Street. You will see various antebellum homes and other historic sites associated with the history of Wilmington. After ending the tour, time will be available to visit the numerous shops, antique stores, and markets distinctive to downtown Wilmington.

The remainder of the battlefield tour group will rendezvous with the walking tour at the foot of Market Street later in the day. The time for meeting and returning to The Days Inn will be announced.

**The cost of the walking tour is \$20 per person**, including tax, gratuity, lunch, transportation and tour guide. Bring your walking shoes and camera!